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The **Nature***Kenya* Newsletter **www.naturekenya.org** **September 2001**

NATURALIST CORNER

Horseshoe bat illustration by Taylor

HORSESHOE BATS AND THE OLOOLUA CAVE BATWATCHING OUTING

BY BERNARD AGWANDA

The Mammal Cammittee had 26 participants to Olooluo Forest in August. The 11 metre long cave only housed about 8 bots ot the time, though known for housing hundreds of bats at warmer times of the year.

The 8 individuals, belong to one species, Ruppell's horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus fumigatus* (family Horseshoe bats). The family name originates from the characteristic shape of their face ornamentation (noseleaf), which resembles a horseshoe. This horseshoe-noseleaf aids these bats in 'seeing' in darkness in a process called echolocation.

This is a group of insect-feeding bats, which help in natural control of insect pests and vectors, such as ophids, mosquitoes, moths, beetles etc.

It was great answering/discussing questions, like; why bats hang upside down, do bats spread diseases, how do bats see at night, what do bats eat, etc.? Watch for the next bat outing and come learn about these fascinating creatures!

REPORTING

KIJABE ENVIROMENT VOLUNTEERS (KENVO) ACTIVITIES

Preparing tree seedlings for planting, Gatamaiyu Forest

In August members of KENVO got together with the community around Kereita Forest (Gatamaiyu forest) at Kereita station tree nursery to pot over 10, 000 seedlings, ready for planting.

Community Forest Management Plan

Kenya Forest Working Group (KFWG) will assist in the development of a management plan for Kereita Forest. KENVO scheduled a stakeholders meeting on 21 August 2001 to inform the community about this new conservation dimension.

From data to actions: Bee-keeping

KENVO plans to put in action recommendations made by the local community on the best way of conserving Kereita Forest while improving their livelihoods. One of the recommendations has been bee-keeping and silk-worm forming. Already members and some farmers working closely with KENVO have taken a one-day training course at ICIPE on sericulture and apiculture.

Monitoring

KENVO has established some permanent plots and transects for monitoring chonges in forest vegetation and bird populations.

KENVO outing

KENVO will be having an educational trip to Amboseli National Park in September.

GET ACTIVE!

Family Nature Day at the Arboretum
Saturday 1 September'01
7:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

FAMILY FUN AND ENTERTAINMENT!

Activities include:Morning run & Environmental activities and games (Tree walks, Butterfly exhibition, Bird walks - carry your binoculars) Admission free

Morning run Registration 500/- (including a free T-shirt and raffle ticket) Proceeds benefit the Arboretum. ***Book with Nature Kenya***
Sponsored by Saforicom

TALKS & VIDEOS

VIDEO

DAVID ATTENBOROUGH'S WORLD OF WILDLIFE: AFRICAN BIG CATS CHEETAH AND LEOPARD BBC NATURAL HISTORY

Monday 10 Sept '01, 5:30 p.m.
National Museums of Kenya, Nairobi, FORD HALL
Refreshments prior & Town drop off

EXCURSIONS

PLANT OUTING TO FOURTEEN FALLS OR BLUE POSTS, THIKA
SATURDAY 22 SEPTEMBER '01

Meet at 8:00 a.m.
at the National Museum, car park.

Book at the Nature Kenya front office.

NATURE KENYA, P. O. Box 44486, 00100 Nairobi. Tel: 749957 / 746090 Fax: 741049 E-mail: eanhs@africaonline.co.ke

BirdLife

World bird festival

WORLD BIRDWATCH

6–7 October 2001

Update

Sponsored accommodation has been offered by:

- Marich Pass Field Studies Centre
- Elesavo Safari Lodge
- Kitengela Glass
- Sirikwa Safaris
- Bobong Camp

T-Shirts available @650/-

With support from Tinga Tinga, the World Birdwatch T-shirts are now ready and available from the Nature Kenya front office. Buy your T-shirt now!!!

Team Entry Form

Please return your entry forms as soon as possible, so that areas of coverage can be well coordinated.

The organising committee can place individuals who wish to enter the competition with a team . Please contact the Birdwatch coordinators.

Take advantage of Special rates for accommodation

The following are special rates, kindly offered by the following properties:

Mara Safari Club and the Ark @ 3000/- and the Aberdare Country Club @ 2500/- per person per night full board
Outspan @ 2,800/- ppfb
Solio Camp @ $70 ppfb

If your team would like to take advantage of these rates (subject to availability of space) please get in touch with Saida at the office.

RESEARCH OPPORTUNITY

Assisting with an Owl Project

A project on owls, with particular reference to those species that occur in and around Kampala, has started at WARM (Department of Wildlife and Animal Resources Management), Makerere University. The study is supported by the International Owl Society (IOS).

Owls are important birds that are often overlooked because the majority of them fly and hunt at night. These nocturnal habits also make them difficult to study.

The researchers at WARM are keen to receive information about sightings of owls. Offers of help with the study are also welcome.

Please contact:

Dr Christine Dranzoa, WARM, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Makerere University.
Email: muk_warm@yahoo.com

Prof. John E Cooper and Mrs Margaret E Cooper, P. O. Box 153, Wellingborough, NN8 2ZA, UK
Email: NGAGI@compuserve.com

BIRDWATCHERS SAFARI KIT - Available in 2 sizes

Large Canvas Bag contains quality Binoculars, 'Birds of Kenya & Northern Tanzania' by Zimmerman & Turner, Map of Kenya, Bird Checklist & Pencil

Small Canvas Bag contains all the above except 'Birds of East Africa' by Richards replaces Zimmerman

Available from Rhino Leisure & Safari, Rhino House, Karen Rd, Nairobi
Phones: 884239, 884019, 0733 704892

REGULAR ACTIVITIES

Sunday Birdwatch (Pot-Luck Outing)

Members meet at the National Museum. Nairobi car park at 9:00 a.m. the third Sunday of every month, i.e. 16 September. The members decide where to go. Bring lunch

TREE WALK

Guided Tree Walks in the Arboretum on the last Monday of every month i.e. 24 September from 9:30 a.m. Meet at the FONA offices beside the Girl Guides HQ. *Those who are not members of FONA or Nature Kenya pay Ksh 100/- fee on arrival at the gate.*

WEDNESDAY MORNING BIRDWALKS

Bird watching walks at sites in and around Nairobi. Meet at the National Museum car park every Wednesday at 8:45 a.m. Return about 12:30 p.m. *Those who are not members can get temporary membership at Ksh 100 per birdwalk, payable on arrival at the car park.*

ARABUKO SOKOKE (COAST)

The Saturday birdwatch with the Arabuko Sokoke Forest Guides Association is on the first Saturday of each month i.e. 1 September, at 6:30 a.m. from the Visitor Centre, Gede. Cost 100/- per person.

FFJ Bird Walk (Coast)

Friends of Fort Jesus birdwalks are held the third Saturday of each month i.e. 15 September, at 4:30 p.m. from Ratna Square, Nyali

DECLARATION

Nature Kenya does not accept any responsibility whatsoever in respect of negligence of any of its staff, volunteers or members organising the outings/trips or for any loss, injury, death or damage to property.

SEPTEMBER DIARY

Sat 1	Arboretum Family fun day & ASF Birdwalks
Mon 10	Video
Sat 15	FFJ Birdwalk
Sun 16	Pot Luck Outing
Sat 22	Plant Outing to Thika
Mon 24	Tree Walk
Fri 28	Compost course

Birdwalks every Wednesday Morning

Editor, **Catherine Ngarachu**

Bird Hotline 749957

Please note the records below are unconfirmed

Peregrine Falcon nesting with two chicks which successfully fledged on 4/8/01
Nairobi, Westlands,
Agip House 8th Floor/ August
Siman Thomset and Craig Sorley, subsequent monitoring of nest by Ronald Mulwa, Patrick Gichuki, James Wachira, Philip McOsano, Fabian Musila, Henry Ndithia

Great Spotted Cuckoo, Golden Pipit, Northern Brownbul, Three Streaked Tchagra, Red-naped Bush-shrike, Grey-headed Bush-shrike, Rasy-patched Bush-shrike
Katutu in Kitui/ August
Elizabeth Maloba/ Jahn Nzau

Lammergeier, Rufous-bellied Heron, Scaly-throated Honeyguide
Mara triangle/ July
Japheth Mwok

partial albino Superb Starling,
near Kingfisher Gorge picnic site, Nairobi N. P.
2 Augur Buzzards, 1 Great Sparrowhawk
Railway Golf Course/ July
Fleur Ng'wena

Please send details to *Kenya Birds*, c/o Nature Kenya or kbirds@africaonline.co.ke

Other sightings

Leopard in the dip on the Ngong Road after the turnoff to Lenana School at 19:08 hours / *June*
George McKnight

TRAINING OPPORTUNITY

BASIC GARDENING COURSE

at the Nairobi Arboretum
Friday 28 September '01,
9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Come and learn how to turn kitchen, lawn and garden waste into useful compost manure and get basic hands-on training on gardening techniques.

Meet at the Arboretum main gate at 9:00 a.m. To book, call Lillian Igweta at Nature Kenya. Cost: 600/- per person

Organised by Friends of Nairobi Arboretum (FONA), all proceeds are used to support the maintenance of the Arboretum.

THANK YOU!

DONATION TO THE NATURE KENYA/ NATIONAL MUSEUM LIBRARY

Mark R. Stanley Price made a very generous donation of several cartons of books, including some classic volumes and monographs on East Africa, many of which are rare.

We express our appreciation for these publications which will be a tremendous resource to the many users of the library.

ADVERTISE IN NATURE NET

Reach over *1000* members by advertising in *Nature Net*

The Nature Kenya Eagle team of staff members, volunteers and the Chairman participated in the Uvumbuzi Bikathon August '01

They braved the gruelling 120kms under the scorching sun to Magadi. They successfully finished the bikathon. Well done guys!!